

THE Harbinger of Light.

A MONTHLY JOURNAL

DEVOTED TO

ZOISTIC SCIENCE, FREE THOUGHT, SPIRITUALISM,
AND THE HARMONIAL PHILOSOPHY.

"Dawn approaches, Error is passing away, Men arising shall hail the day."

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DURING, and for some time after, the formation of the British National Association of Spiritualists, considerable discussion arose on the subject of organisation, and the propriety or otherwise of the formation of associations in connection with Spiritualism. It was argued by the opponents of organisation that Spiritualism had progressed rapidly without it, and hence there was no need of it now; and secondly (and more generally) on account of the danger of such organisations crystallizing and forming centres of authority like existing church systems. We take exception to both these positions as unsound and untenable. In the first place, the statement that Spiritualism has progressed without organisation is not true. Organisations have existed in all the principal centres of Spiritualism, and even the circle itself is a manifestation of organisation on a small scale, and an illustration of the necessity of co-operation for mutual development and progress. With regard to the second objection, it is simply begging the question. The question is—Is organisation proper? The possible results that might flow from the inversion of the idea or intention of such organisation have nothing to do with the principle. It is our opinion that organisation is both proper and advisable, when the objects sought to be attained are, in the estimation of those who organise, good.

It must be apparent to all thinking minds that the accomplishment of the results sought for in all organisations where the object is the development of the individual, and the dissemination of truth, as understood by him, depends entirely on the disinterestedness of the members composing it. Where selfishness in any of its multifarious forms intrudes, the element of inversion, or of disintegration is there, and the attainment of the full object is impossible; but where a number of persons, whose happiness has been augmented by the acquisition

of a knowledge of things not generally known, co-operate with the view of disseminating that knowledge amongst their fellows (presuming their mode of action to be guided by wisdom), the result must be good, and in the nature of things more powerful for good than isolated effort. We may instance the case of the local association as evidence of the good of organisation. The preliminary meeting which led to the establishment of the association consisted of ten persons. They affirmed the desirability of organisation for their mutual benefit, and for the dissemination of information on the subject of Spiritualism, and an association was accordingly formed, which has materially aided in the progress of Spiritualism and free religious thought. It has brought to the front Mr. Peebles, Messrs. Ross, Tyerman, Manns, Walker, and many others; and last, though not least, has inaugurated the popular services at the Temperance Hall, where assembles every Sunday the largest congregation in Victoria. Would these objects have been attained without association? Most certainly not. Unitary action must ultimate in combination to accomplish any great end. It is a poor, weak policy to hesitate and draw back at the possible evils that might arise from imperfection in the material. If the principle is right, no minor considerations should deter us from acting upon it. A few well-balanced minds at the helm can always prevent any serious deviation from the course laid down, and warn their less vigilant brethren of rocks and breakers ahead. There is a beautiful mutuality in all nature, and in the starry heavens the telescope reveals to us groups and clusters of suns and planets, combining and dependent on each other, and working harmoniously round a common centre. In social life all the evils of society may be traced to want of co-operation, from which arises selfish antagonisms, and in religious matters it is the same. Truth is evolved from the inner consciousness, and it should be the aim of all progressive associations to present to the world their highest conceptions of it, never dogmatizing or seeking to proselytize, but modestly offering their thoughts for the consideration of their fellows. We would urge all Freethinkers and Spiritualists to combine with this object, seeking not the aggrandisement of their association, but the good of humanity, small associations with this platform, will undoubtedly produce greater results than would be possible by individual effort.

PLANCHETTE COMMUNICATION.

WHENCE comes that light so pure and bright
 Into the drooping soul,
 When earthborn troubles bear a blight
 That conquers mind's control?

Not long, do doubts and shadows cling
 Around the aspiring soul;
 For the heavenborn beam of love divine
 Points to the longed for goal.

Where peace and rest comes to the heart which has passed through the waves of the disturbing elements of earth-life, which are the grinding stones, and the winnowing apparatus, that all who come into the second life must undergo. The flower fades sometimes in youth, ere it has scented the air with its aroma, and sometimes drops its petals one by one, ere the fruit comes. But whichever way or time it goes, it obeys the laws of nature, and bears its fruit either in one sphere or another.

COMMUNICATION.

Counsel we give to you, and to come near to you, to take thought together, of the world, and its wonders, to exchange experiences, to share joys and assuage sorrows, is a holy and a loving task. Receive us then into the inmost palace of your soul, that we may converse with you of those things which are of eternal interest and importance. For this two things are necessary, first, that you aid us in preparing a way into its sanctuary, a door through which we may enter at will, and without difficulty. Next, that you prepare its precincts for our presence, cleansing it of contaminating passions, evil desires that cloud it, driving forth sorrow, care, and all discords that jar with harmonies celestial. Purify it in its utmost parts, by careful foreseeing preparation, make ready seats that they may rest, and frugal fare of good deeds done, or sweet thoughts or offerings of tenderness and love, deck it with all things beautiful, let knowledge be obedient handmaiden, then shall we give you greeting, and the kiss of peace upon the brow, joining in that communion which is the glory and the food of the spirit. How fair a thing it is to see such a temple, built up in your toilsome existence, lifting its cool white pillars from out the dust of earth, offering protection against sudden rain of circumstance, secluded from all error and all ill; within it burning bright the flame of heavenly love upon the altar of the heart, and around it the sweet choristers of the affections, pouring forth their melodious lays, to the grand anthem that swells from the organ of the soul. Take off those shoes of narrower experience which you find necessary to guard your feet in the thorny ways of life, for you tread on holy ground. Holiest of holies is the pure spirit of man, the light of the universe, and the lamp of God, shining brightly through the vastness of eternity. Reverence this spirit, concealed in thy meanest brother, knowing its hidden treasures, and guard well thine own, for it is, and contains, all that thou had or shall have. According to the welcome will be the guests, and by the entertainment you offer them, measure your reward; though it is given to you in return a thousand fold.

It is a solemn thing to meet your friends thus, tender and joyous, if they still retain the body visible to the eye, and responsive to the touch, but sweet and still richer in varied blessings, is that, with those descending from heights of wider vision, wearing the snowy experiences of life lengthened, to you the hot and headstrong youths of the soul.

Happy are they, and earnest, and faithful, emulate them then, singing they appear with full hearts and hands, rich with priceless gifts, let your answering chorus give them glad welcome.

Of worlds apart, ambassadors, they come, then let the palms be strewn, and hymns delight the skies, no stint of happiness, no space in peace, clothed in your purest thoughts, bid them to enter in, till all take up the cadence of the song, of heaven and earth, and earth and heaven made one in holy union.

To Correspondents.

Communications for insertion in this Journal should be plainly written, and as concise as possible.

SPIRITUALISM IN BARNAWARTHA.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR.—In opening a letter on a subject like Spiritualism, the writer may, from an imperfect acquaintance with the orthodox manner of submitting such matter for publication, be allowed a wide margin for attempting an exposition of occurrences which until recently, he had viewed not only in the mild light of Scepticism, but in whom had settled a decided conviction of the impossibility of those so-called spiritual manifestations, and therefore before entering upon a description of the results of a series of investigations as to its reality, and a detailed account of the last *seance* held in Barnawartha on Sunday, 9th May, inst., he may as well express his utter inability to follow the rules of orthodox reporting and subside to the old fashioned and more natural way of relating actual occurrences without the addition of sensational colouring.

In doing so, my own ideas on the matter, will, as far as possible be confined to actual observations but in some instances I rely on the testimony of witnesses in whom I place the most implicit reliance and confidence. These witnesses in whom I trust for information are members of the newly formed Circle, and are private and intimate friends.

I see that my inexperience has led me into difficulty already, as in commencing I speak of myself indefinitely as the writer, and subsequently use the personal pronoun. This may lead to a general cloudiness of individuality, so to obviate it I will in future speak of myself in the first person singular. To my subject:—The Barnawartha Circle was formed during the latter part of 1874. It consists of eight persons, four males, and four females. Before proceeding I may say that I do not belong to the Circle, and am merely writing this communication to the *Harbinger* at the request of some of my friends, (members of the Circle), and on account of the surprising manifestations which have occurred in my own presence. But, as I do not know whether it is desirable or agreeable to mention names in full, I think it better to confine myself to initials.

When first the Circle sat but poor manifestations were presented, but as its members advanced or more properly speaking, developed themselves, the results have been of a higher order, still the occasional mendacity of those from whom replies are ostensibly and nominally delivered, rather tends to interfere with the progress and development of the members of our Circle. But irrespective of the occasional Scepticism or the acknowledged belief amongst more advanced brethren in Spiritualism, we have had physical manifestations of so extraordinary and violent a character that the most unbelieving bigot in existence had he witnessed the manifestations, could not but have submitted to a relaxation of his ideas and given a tacit admission that the phenomena presented, owed its origin to a superhuman force. Without further prolixity I shall proceed to the description of the last *seance*.

In addition of the usual Circle of eight, there were a number of visitors from Yackandandah and other places in the neighborhood. One of the visitors whom I shall henceforth individualise as the Doctor, who is to a certain extent a believer in the doctrine, was on this particular evening most zealous in his endeavours to obtain personal proofs of the unassisted numerous levitations of the table, and after various trials assented to the belief of the reality.

Up to the meeting of the 9th inst., only partial and sometimes total exclusion of light has been insisted upon by the spirits, (I suppose I must designate them thus, although as yet it is not my conviction), but at this *seance* Mr. E. one of the members of the circle, extemporised a shield which although not completely excluding the light, by its semi opacity and peculiar color, almost draped the proceedings in darkness, yet left sufficient light to enable all with a little difficulty, to see what was going on.

After joining hands and remaining in a state of passivity for about two minutes, the movements commenced. The question was then asked if the surroundings were favorable to the reception of the best manifestations, and an affirmative answer received. To another question as to whether the table was moved by a spirit, who had at the last *seance* (Tuesday previous), stated his intention of being present, the spirit replied yes, and that it was his purpose to remove the leaf of the table from off the legs. This spirit at a former *seance*, gave his name as *A Vagabond Gipsy*, and had previously exhibited a tendency to violence.

On this occasion he was here to his word, for no sooner had he answered the last question than the table commenced a series of movements altogether impossible to describe. First on one side then on the other, then upside down, writhing and gyrating like a living being in mortal agony, twisting, groaning and creaking in the most extraordinary manner. The visitors present seized every opportunity to view its movements in the obscured light. Some one being requested to attempt to stay its movements, attempted to do so, and were thrown after each endeavour wholly away from it, completely exhausted with their exertions.

At last, after about fifteen minutes careering about the floor, the screws (which by subsequent inspection I found to be three inches in length) which were used to fasten the leaf of the table to the legs and frame, gave way, and with one wild swoop the leaf or upper portion of the table was in an instant high above the heads of the circle. A cry from the medium, Mrs. E., caused those who could reach to keep their hand above, and after about half-a-minute's vibration in mid-air, the leg denuded portion of the table slowly descended sideways to the floor, and for a moment assumed comparative rest. Then, as if actuated by a desire to applaud its own efforts, commenced first to pound away in the most deafening manner at the floor, gliding about as it did so, and now and then swooping (I can describe the movement by no other name) into mid-air. Occasionally the Doctor and myself and others used our united powers to prevent its levitation, but our efforts seemed as puny and unavailing against the amazing and invisible power, as the strength of the infant is to that of a full-grown adult. Finally, the table-leaf rested horizontally on the floor, and whilst in this position the Doctor, on two different occasions, sat upon it within the circle, and was as often violently ejected from his post. A lady, not a member of the circle, once, after persuasion, took a similar position, and was also summarily ejected. After some time all the members of the circle, with the exception of Mrs. E., the medium, and Master R. F., a powerful little medium, aged ten years, retired from the table at the request of visitors present, in order to see if the phenomena would continue. The levitation, although not in such a violent manner, was continued, and various movements, including intelligent communications vouchsafed. At last Master R. F., the little medium above spoken of, was left by himself, and the movements still continued. Then all the circle joined hands, when it was spelt out that the vagabond Gipsy had gone, and the communication, "Give to God—good night" was rapped out. To describe all the eccentric parts would be a monotonous repetition of what I have already done. For my own part I am, from a thorough sceptic, reduced to the admission of the facts of levitation of ponderous substances, and however it may clash with prior teachings based on the attraction of gravitation theory, I can fearlessly say that I have seen a body weighing half a hundredweight floating in mid-air with as little apparent effort as is manifested in the atmospheric support of an itinerant feather.

Such is the substance of this *seance*. If anything further of note transpires I will forward it.

Yours, &c.,

Barnawartha.

JOHN W. H. WYSE.

At a former *seance* a spirit, giving his name as *Peter Slater*, and describing himself as a *gardener*, presented himself. He said that he was killed in Melbourne fifteen years ago. Perhaps some other circles have had visits from him. I merely append this for information.

J. W. H. W.

THE BIBLE—A DIVINE BOOK.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR—Referring to an article that appeared in the *Mount Alexander Mail* of the 10th inst., signed Adolphe Monod, the writer said—"Scripture calls itself the written word, and Jesus Christ the 'word made flesh.'" There is no other book, even amongst the best, which, like this, make known to us the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. All are more or less tainted with human error—this alone is exempt from them. It is the book of God, full of the truth of God; in it we hear God speak by the Holy Spirit."

I am of opinion a book is divine just as far as it inculcates exalted truths and divine ideas; and fiendish if it teach falsehood, war, and wickedness. It is not the velleum, nor the label "holy," but the ideas that possess moral worth. All books, past and present, are sacred, just so far as their pages are filled with chaste sentiments and heaven-inspiring principles.

I shall now quote a few of the commands found in the Old Testament Scriptures attributed to the Deity:—"And Moses said, thus saith the Lord, put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbour." (Ex. xxxii., 27).

"The Lord spake unto Moses, saying, speak unto Aaron, saying, whatsoever man he be that hath a blemish, is lame, or hath a broken hand, or a flat nose, or a crooked back, or a defective eye, shall not approach to offer the bread of the Lord." (Lev. xxi., 16-20).

"Joshua smote all the country and all their kings, he left none remaining, but utterly destroyed all that breathed, as the Lord God of Israel had commanded." (Joshua x., 40).

"Now go (said Samuel to Saul) and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have and spare them not, but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep." (1 Sam. xv., 3).

"But of the cities of those people which the Lord thy God doth give thee for an inheritance, thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth; but thou shalt utterly destroy them, namely the Hittites and the Amorites, the Canaanites and the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee." (Deut. xx., 16, 17).

"And it came to pass, that in the morning watch the Lord looked unto the host of the Egyptians. . . . And he (the Lord) took off their chariot wheels, that they drave them heavily; so that the Egyptians said, let us flee from the face of Israel, for the Lord fighteth for them against the Egyptians." (Ex. xiv., 24, 25).

"And the Lord said unto Joshua, Fear not, neither be thou dismayed: take all the people of war with thee, and arise and go up to Ai. . . . For Joshua drew not his hand back, wherewith he stretched out the spear, until he had utterly destroyed all the inhabitants of Ai. And so it was, that all who fell that day, both of men and women, were twelve thousand, even all the men of Ai." (Joshua viii., 1, 26).

"The Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Avenge the children of Israel of the Midianites: afterwards shalt thou be gathered unto thy people. . . . And Moses sent them to war a thousand of every tribe: and they warred against the Midianites, as the Lord commanded Moses, and they slew all males. . . . And Moses said unto them, Have ye saved all the women alive? Now therefore kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman that hath known man by lying with him. But all the women children that hath not known a man by lying with him, keep alive for yourselves." (Num. xxxi., 1-18).

May I ask, can any man believe that God, the Infinite God and Father of our spirits, whose name is love, "ever spoke to Moses," commanding him to slay everything that breathed, to destroy poor, helpless old men, and mercilessly put to the sword the women and the little children of the land—just such little children, perhaps, as Jesus took in his arms and blessed, saying, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven."

This fiendish war against the Midianites was purely

aggressive. The only possible reason conceivable was the suspicion and jealousy of Moses. And could anything be more infernal than such brutal transactions—such wholesale slaughter of women and children? And yet it is all represented as commanded and sanctioned of him who is the source of all purity and holiness.

In the verses 5 and 6, chapter vi., of the gospel by Matthew, Christ forbids public prayers, but not the least notice is taken of that injunction by any Christian, whether Catholic or Protestant.

He says, "We should not pray in the synagogues, nor in the streets, nor in public," which certainly means also churches and chapels; he requests us to pray in secret, in our closets, with the doors shut, &c.

No Christian ever obeyed this command; they have built and still build churches and chapels in every important street of each town, and even in villages, for the very purpose of delivering their prayers in public, mainly in the presence of thousands of bystanders, and in Catholic countries, besides the public devotions in the churches, they exhibit religious processions and jubilees in the open streets and fields, attended by immense numbers of people.

If Christ is a divinity or God himself, why do we not obey his precepts? why do we not practise our devotions and prayers in secret closets with doors shut, as he ordains? Why? yes why? Because not many have any serious faith in his divine character. But very few have the courage to confess their scepticism on this point, for fear of being rebuked or despised by others.

Great thinkers have, it is true, emancipated themselves from the yoke of their paternal influence or primitive religious training; but those enlightened men are few in comparison to the masses, the plurality of whom follow mechanically the course of their youthful instruction, either from lack of mental faculties, time, or want of inclination to trouble their heads about the obscure perplexities and intricacies of theological controversies or religious questionabilities, so they prefer to let things go on as they are.

It is no proof of a man's understanding to be able to affirm whatever he pleases; but, to be able to discern that what is true is true, and that what is false is false—this is the mark and character of intelligence.

The so-called sceptics, infidels, are not the parties who have brought the Scriptures into disrepute, contempt, and ridicule; but the over-zealous, weak-minded Bible-worshippers. Thousands of daily Bible-readers have not any clear conception of its contents, of its principles, precepts, doctrines; are not conscious of the superior excellence of one book over another, but esteem all alike from Genesis to Revelation; calling the Chronicles, and the Psalms, and the Song of Solomon, and the Evangel, and the Revelation, indiscriminately, the Word of God; fancying them of equal importance, equal authority, equal verity; all alike inspired, and all equally profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; thinking as highly of the story about Jonah in the whale's belly as of the parable of the prodigal son; as highly of the prophetess Deborah's inspired psalm to the honour and glory of Joel's perfidious murder, as of the Founder of Christianities' sermon on the Mount of Olives; as highly of the books of the Old as of the books of the New Testament—believing one thing just as blindly as another; because forsooth, "it stands printed in the Bible!" which, without any discrimination, without judgment, without any reasonable pretext whatever, they call God's word.

We have all heard of the "pious old woman," who, when asked—Do you really believe that a whale swallowed Jonah? replied, Believe it, to be sure I do; is it not printed in the Bible? and if the Bible told me that Jonah swallowed the whale, I should believe it! This anecdote is often instanced as a specimen of admirable faith in whatever stands in the Bible.

Now I venture to remark, in conclusion, that the propagation of the Scriptures not only proves useless, but does more harm than good, for when a book (called holy) relates such ridiculous, improbable, and unnatural statements, intermixed, moreover, with immoral and obscene incidents, the majority of those who read them will scorn all religious feeling, and allow their bad ten-

dencies full play without the least scruple; whereas, had they not perused the equivocal records of the Bible, they would perhaps have acted according to the good side of the conscience and sense with which God has provided them.

May 14th, 1875.

LAYMAN.

PREJUDICE: OR, THE REV. MR. LEGGE'S ADDRESS.

The Rev. Mr. Legge's Address before the Congregational Union at Ballarat, April 12, 1875.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR—I received a copy of Mr. Legge's address before the Congregational Union, per post, from some unknown friend, which is really a curious document—an illustration of how drowning men grasp at straws.

His discourse is directed against "Supernatural Religion;" in it he professes to trace the existence of the four gospels thirteen years farther back than the Author of that work does, viz., to A.D. 177: and then triumphantly asks, "*Where on earth* did they come from in those thirteen years? The duty of a preacher of the Gospel is that of a witness, not a questioner, who demands his audience to prove a negative. Jesus, we are told, commanded his disciples to 'tarry at Jerusalem till they were endowed with power from on high.' He said to them, 'Ye shall receive power after the Holy Spirit is given unto you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.'—Acts i., 8.

The duty of a witness is to furnish evidence, without which no one can believe. The Koran existed in the day of Mahomet, but that is no reason why we should credit it, though we have evidence that Mahomet was then alive; but we have no evidence that the twelve apostles ever lived, therefore, if the Gospels existed in the year 70, it would not prove them to be genuine. What would be the consequence if the rev. gentleman passed a cheque as genuine on no stronger evidence than he has for the truth of these Gospels? He would be held responsible, and most probably be committed as a rogue.

This asking the question Where the Gospels come from? is a concession on his part that he does not know. If so, it is dishonest to assume that they are genuine. The law demands "that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word should be established."

How comes it that Christian Churches discourage investigation, and shun discussion with each other and with sceptics who are searching after truth? How comes it they adopt so low a standard for truth? one that justice and science alike repudiate and condemn as unjust? These books they must know contain statements irreconcilable with reason, with each other, with the law and the prophets, with the laws of Nature and the sciences; while the Jewish nation, among whom the events are said to have transpired, declare them to be false. Christians cannot tell when, where, by whom, or in what language they were written, nor can they even prove that the Apostles could write who were ignorant and unlearned men; notwithstanding all these they dare affirm them to be true! "God demands truth in the inner parts."—Acts iv., 13. Truth and accuracy are the same; inaccuracy is practically deception and falsehood.

The rev. gentleman puts an important question which has long ago engaged my attention: he asks, Where have the Gospels come from?

I have carefully examined this subject; the following is the result of my investigation:—

1. Matthew, Mark, and Luke's Gospels appear to have been written about A.D. 70.

2. Jesus was not the Messiah promised to Israel; yet he was a genuine character, a most remarkable man.

3. There have been three editions of the above Gospels before 177: the first has been corrupted by Jews; the second afterwards by Gentiles, ignorant of the law and the prophets, the customs of the Jews, and the geography of the land of Judea—these have left their traces behind them.

All four appear to contain "saving clauses," inserted to reconcile contending parties, and get them passed at the council, just as is done in parliamentary acts in our present day. Truth is not generally difficult of detection to the experienced truthseeker, though this is almost impossible to the prejudiced mind.

In conclusion, I would propose a return question to Mr. Legge. Can he inform me what became of the twelve miraculously endowed witnesses—Apostles—who went forth "unto all nations" with a promise that they should triumph "over all the powers of the enemy, and that nothing should by any means hurt them?"—Luke x., 19, from him who said "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."—Matt. xxviii., 18; and what came of all the churches they are said to have been planted throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria, who we are informed, shortly before the land was desolated by the Romans, "were edified, walking in the fear of God, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost."—Acts ix., 31.; and the number of disciples at Jerusalem that was greatly multiplied, and the great company of the priests who were obedient to the faith?—Acts vi. Were they all destroyed, and left not a wreck behind? And how comes it that after Christ has received "all power" that evil men and seducers are to wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived?—Thes. iii., 13.

I am, &c.,

R.

SEANCE AT WESTMORLAND HALL.

The following account of a seance in London was forwarded to us by Mr. Stow, but reached us too late for last issue. Mr. S. has since arrived in Melbourne, and related many interesting experiences, some of which we shall publish in our next:—

SEANCE HELD AT WESTMORLAND HALL, FRIDAY,
FEB. 19TH.

Mediums—Messrs. Eglinton and W. Haxby. The room is about 16 feet square, of brick and plaster; window in the roof, which was covered with a green blind. Across the corner of the room, opposite to the door, was fixed a piece of wood, about 4 feet long, 1½ by 3 inches, to which was tacked a curtain, the top of which was about 6 feet from the floor. There was nothing else in that corner of the room but two chairs, upon which the mediums sat. In the centre of the room a small loo or round table, upon which was placed an English concertina and the ring of an old tambourine. Around the room were seated in all 28 persons, forming a circle about 4 feet distant from the table. Distributed among the circle were two card speaking tubes, a mouth harmonicon, and a bell. When all was ready each person, taking the hand of those that sat next to them, the gas was put out, and we joined in singing a hymn. In a few minutes the instruments floating about the room played in harmony with the tune we were singing. The speaking-tubes were used freely as bludgeons, striking all the members of the circle, sometimes on the head, back, legs, hands, &c. Spirit-hands were felt I think by every person in the room, certainly I felt 3 or 4 hands about me at the same moment. (The materialised spirit-hands are as common in circles here as the movement of the table is in Australia).

Some one present said that he had his watch taken out of his pocket, engraved, and returned to him. I therefore asked the spirit (who called himself Joey) if possible to engrave a word upon my watch, which was objected to first on the ground of not having power, it then being late. After a rest for about one minute a hand was placed on my head, and then I felt my watch and chain being removed from my pocket. It passed away in the direction of the centre of the room and above our heads. I could hear the chain rattle. The watch was returned to me in less than two minutes, with the word "Joey" written on the inside case. The watch was closed in front of my face.

The circle was then re-arranged for materialization. I and another were appointed to search the mediums, which we did completely.

They then took their seats behind the curtains as before described.

The light was put out, and in a few seconds we were directed to light the gas. The head of a spirit was seen by all above the curtain, and there remained about 15 seconds. The light put out, and again lit, a face and shoulders came between the curtains. This, in a similar manner, was followed by a head and bust as if the spirit was half above and below the floor. Within a few seconds a full-sized figure of a man stood outside the curtains: his head and eyes were seen distinctly to move. The gas was put out, and re-lit as quickly as possible, when the mediums were there seated as we had seen them before, dressed in black. The spirits were all robed in white.

To conclude this truly remarkable seance, one of the mediums (Mr. Eglinton) withdrew, and I was directed to securely tie Mr. Haxby, which I did so that he could not move his hands or feet, nor could he get off the chair. He was the only person behind the curtains. The light was put out, and soon again re-lit, when a full-sized spirit-form of a man with dark whiskers stood outside the curtains, and in a few seconds more another form appeared on the other side of the medium outside the curtains. The gas was put out, and re-lit in about 3 seconds, when the medium sat there tied as I left him, and deeply entranced. I am quite sure the rope had not been untied, and equally certain am I that if it had been the medium could not have produced the phenomena above described, and that it was not a delusion is beyond all doubt, for every person (27 in number) testify to the same facts.

When I return I hope to tell many of my old friends of experiences passing wonderful.

I beg to remain,

Yours fraternally;

GEO. A. STOW.

Editor "Harbinger of Light."

A NARRATIVE.

OF THE SPIRITS OF SIR HENRY MORGAN AND HIS
DAUGHTER ANNIE, USUALLY KNOWN AS JOHN
AND KATIE KING, GIVEN—BY H. T. CHILD, M.D.
Conclusion.

THE ORIGIN OF MATTER.

The most important and interesting of the themes on which we have spoken to you, and that which is awaking a more profound feeling in the community than anything which has ever claimed the attention of mankind, is the production of matter by spirits and the formation of material objects, especially the materialization of spirit forms, which are recognized as being similar to those possessed by individuals who formerly lived on this earth. We have stated that the two great problems before the scientific world to-day, are, what is matter, and whence does it come? We have also endeavoured to show that matter is simply a result of the crossing of the lines of force, and that by a change in these lines all the different forms and qualities of matter are produced. The knowledge of these facts, and the operation of these laws has enabled us to produce those manifestations which have startled the world.

There are two methods by which we produce material objects: The first is that by which we produce them originally, and without using anything which has previously existed, which seems to accord with the theological idea of "creating matter out of nothing;" though this is not the fact as matter is a result of well known cause. The second method and the one by which almost all objects are made, is by reproducing forms which have had a prior existence. Every form of matter has what we call an absolute spirit that is essential to its existence as a form. This absolute spirit exists also in living beings, but is subject to what is called the living spirit, during all the time that this dwells in the body and keeps it alive. After death this absolute spirit is left, and the decomposition of the body, as in the case of inanimate objects, does not disturb it, and cause it to disappear at once.

These absolute spirits are not immortal; they retain their forms and characters only for a limited time. They are subject, however, to influences which may prolong their existence. This continuance of an absolute spirit is dependent mainly upon the influence of human spirits. Whenever a human spirit has a desire to retain any object it imparts to it through its will-power more or less permanency of character. By these means we provide ourselves with habitations and all the surroundings which we desire to have in the interior life, and we have the power of retaining them just as long as we need them. When we leave them, unless some other spirits desire to retain them, they will pass away. By this means spirits provide themselves with such clothing as they desire to have. Mediums in all ages have seen spirits clothed in various kinds of garments, generally such as renders their recognition more easy. It has been supposed by some that the appearance of clothing was merely a psychological impression made upon the mind of the mediums, but if this were so you might also conclude the appearance of the spirit was also subjective and psychological, as it is in some cases.

The manner in which spirits form their clothing will be readily understood. We take the absolute spirit of any garment that we desire to have, and by a simple act of the will clothe it with a material substance. Thus, for instance, a friend desires to have his plain drab coat and broad-brimmed hat, and he takes the absolute spirit of some of these that are most desirable to him, and though the earthly material which composed these has long been removed, by a simple effort of the will, he clothes them again with such material elements as he chooses, and has a garment that suits his taste. The military man makes up his garments in like manner, from the absolute spirits of such garments as are attractive to him; so in all the different positions of life here, spirits soon learn to supply themselves with whatsoever is desirable and suitable for them.

Materialized spirits have abundant means of supplying themselves with whatsoever they desire in the way of clothing; hence, as you have seen, we were enabled to present different dresses at almost every one of our seances. We have not only all the ancient and modern wardrobes of earth from which to draw these absolute spirits, but many of us have access to some from other planets; and as we said before, it is possible to construct these garments, *de nova*. Spirits in the higher spheres do this altogether, as they are not attracted to those absolute spirits which have been in any way connected with earthly magnetism. You are not able to see any of these finer garments and robes, and will be obliged to take our words for their existence, until you can go with us to see them. Those which we bring to earth are readily seen and handled by you, as you are aware, and we have the power to make them permanent for you. In our next article we shall speak of the materialization of spirit forms.

MATERIALIZATION OF SPIRIT FORMS.

This is the culminating effort of our labours on the physical plane, and the one which will furnish mankind with the most satisfactory evidence of the fact of immortality; it is, therefore, of the highest importance that we should give you clear and correct views of this. It is well known that spirits have appeared to mortals in all ages of the world, and among all people, and there is no fact more universally established than this. It has been said that there were tribes who had no idea of a God, but never one that had not some notions, however crude and imperfect they may have been, in reference to the existence of spirits. There are two methods by which spirits have always been able to make themselves manifest to mankind. Namely: psychological impressions made upon the sensitive human mind presenting subjective forms. Second, actual objective forms presented to the external visual organs of man, and seen by one, or numerous individuals; the latter being the most satisfactory, as by a multitude of witnesses the truth is confirmed. The psychological impressions may be sufficient for the individual receiving them, but they fail to carry conviction to the masses of

the people. There is a natural and proper desire on the part of every one to see what others have seen.

We have given you our ideas of the formation of matter, and also of the means by which spirits produce material objects. The process of materializing a spiritual body is more complex. Those who accept the philosophical declaration of the apostle Paul, "that there is a natural body," meaning thereby, an external, material one, "and a spiritual body," will have no difficulty in realizing the fact that all spirits, however advanced and refined they may have become, have bodies which are composed of material substance, though not such matter as your external senses can take cognizance of.

In order that a spirit may present itself in what is understood as a materialized form, so as to be seen by your external visual organs, they must have their spiritual bodies covered, more or less densely, with a tangible, material substance. This material substance is not drawn from your physical bodies, nor from the atmosphere, but the forces which produce it are drawn from the medium, the circle, and the atmosphere. We do not take your skin, nor your flesh and blood to create these material forms, but we take the forces which produce these tissues in part from you. It is usual in the first place in presenting a materialized form of a spirit simply to cover the exterior of the body with the materials thus formed, so that you have little more than what the artist term "still life" in these. We have the power, however, of materializing the internal organs, especially the organs of speech, so that spirits are able to give utterance to vocal sounds. We can also materialize a spiritual heart, blood vessels and all the other organs, so that you may feel the pulse, and become cognizant of their existence, as you and others have done in the case of Katie. The reason why she declined to present her wrist to you when you first asked her, was that those organs were not fully materialised at that time, and you would have drawn a wrong conclusion if she had given you permission to feel her arm, and you did not find a pulsation in the artery. In order that you shall have a correct idea of our real conditions in the spirit life we must materialize all parts of our bodies.

We know it is a tax upon the credulity of many to tell them that we have all the organs of our anatomical and physiological systems much more perfect here than we had when on earth, but it is a fact that mankind should know. The process of materializing spirit forms is performed in this manner; a spirit who is willing to try the experiment, which is not always a painless one, is selected and brought by certain spirits into the presence of a suitable medium and circle, where they gather those forces which produce the materialization which they throw in currents on the spirit, and there is a gradual and beautiful deposit of a material covering upon that part of the body which we desire to exhibit to mortal vision, or the entire body, as the case may be. This material generally forms a very thin coating and is quite temporary in its character, so that a few minutes exposure to light, which has a powerful decomposing effect upon it, will cause it to become dissipated hence the necessity for a cabinet into which spirits may retire from the actual presence and influence of light. In this manner we make hands and faces and sometimes entire forms, with external and internal organs so materialized as to manifest their existence and show that they perform their functions.

It will be seen from this that the materialized form is not the exact body which the spirit had when in earth-life, although there is an effort to make it just as near like that as it can be, in order for recognition. There are various influences which may render it impossible to produce a *fac simile* of the original. The same spirit materialized under different conditions, and drawing the forces from different mediums, must necessarily vary in its appearance. These materializations are in reality only busts, or statues made in the best and most artistic manner that we can do it. There are those who will object to this, and say that it is only showing us a shadow or picture of our friends; we want to see the reality. Such persons do not realize that in order to

exhibit these forms we must have the real spirit there, and cover it with the material elements that make it visible. Do such persons ever reflect that when they suppose they see their earthly friends in the form, they are only seeing a substance much more distinct from the reality of their friends, than that which we show them in our materializations, a substance which is not so ethereal that it will be dissipated in a moment.

There are many persons who possess this form of mediumship, although they may not be aware of it. Those who are desirous to cultivate this power so as to obtain materializations, should sit in circles for that purpose. There will generally be some one developed either in this or in some other phase of mediumship, and they will be enabled to give directions as to the proper mode of holding the circle for materializations. This is an artistic work requiring a knowledge of the laws by which it is performed, as well as a skill which can only be obtained by repeated practice. The materializations produced by different spirits will vary. There are numerous schools here in which this art is taught; pupils are trained and sent out to practice. We have been connected with a school of this kind for a long time, and it is a part of our business to go with the students wherever they may find an opportunity to practice, and assist them all we can. This is the reason why our names are so often connected with materializations in various parts of the world. I, John King, have said I have naturally the powers of a leader, and wherever I go this position is assigned to me. Katie, my daughter, whom you have seen so often, has been more frequently Materialised than any other spirit that we know, and has acquired a better facility, and more power in this than any other spirit. Hence were we desire to make the strongest impression, and do the best work, she is the foremost one. There are large bands of spirits who have entered upon this in the most earnest manner, and who will accomplish their purpose in enlightening humanity.

We are aware that few of our readers will fully comprehend the reasons which prompted us to give our private narratives to the world. There is a law in relation to this, which will be better understood as you progress and become unfolded in your interior natures, that requires this for a certain phase of development. Concealment and compromise will only pass away when mankind learn that their highest good, and their most satisfactory advancement depends upon confession of all our acts to those whom this will bless. We are aware that this book will be received very differently by different individuals; a large class will treat it with indifference.

There are those among Spiritualists, who will feel exceedingly irritated by it, and expend a great amount of bitter invective and slander towards us as spirits and our mediums, all of which will be entirely harmless to us, but sooner or later recoil upon those whom we willingly forgive because, in their ignorance they know not what they do. Those who cannot receive these things would do well to wait till time shall make manifest what is true. It is a matter of regret that so many, who have entered into the ranks of Spiritualism, have failed to realise the fact set forth by Arago, "That he is a rash man, who outside of pure mathematics, pronounces anything impossible," forgetting that life is progressive and truth is constantly being unfolded to those who seek it in a proper manner. Like the theologian they set down stakes, and pronounce those things impossible which do not come within the limits prescribed by their beliefs; such persons may become quite as dogmatic as the church member, and, perhaps, without knowing it, lay the same barriers in the way of the reception of truth for themselves and those around them, whom they influence. Such is the tendency of the human mind in its present infantile condition, and there are those who imagine that incredulity is a mark of wisdom, while, in fact it is even less to be respected than the opposite extreme, credulity, for this, by accepting those things which are not true, furnishes an exercise for the mind in ridding itself of those things which will not bear the closest scrutiny and investigation, while it receives many

truths which the other condition precludes. We do not advise either of these extremes, but that beautiful road which lies between the two, which neither rejects nor receives anything until satisfactory evidence is given, and which is ever willing to receive evidence and examine it with calmness and serenity, neither exulting over its rejections or its reception, but being thankful for the power of discrimination, by which alone the truth is possibly received. There is another class, and we are conscious that it is a large and rapidly increasing one; who will receive this book with gladness, and accepting the truths which it presents, will be profited thereby. We respect and appreciate these, and would say, that it will be our aim, as it has been in the past to labor for the presentation of the truths which are revealed to us from time to time. While we have no condemnation for any, "malice towards none and charity for all," we will continue our labors, and do all we can to bless spirits in the form and out of it.

LOVE THAT IS TRUE.

From the "Shaker and Shakeress."

"TRUE love worketh no evil." In meditating on the subject of *true love*, we find, in its meaning, a growth of the higher life—a depth of pure aspiration, in which the inner feelings of the soul work in harmony with the spirit of eternal good; an element, which is intuitive in every human being, as an attribute of the Divine Creator. As "the tree is known by its fruit," so is *true love* by its workings in the soul: which secure eternal treasures, not only to individuals, but to the grand whole as one; for its power is Omnipotent.

Do we not learn the lesson of love, from the example of our Saviour? His life was a living testimony of this most noble principle. And what were his workings? Why, he toiled assiduously, for the benefit of humanity—for the development of higher principles of enduring worth.

At the expense of personal comfort, through sorrowing of spirit, and trouble of soul, incessantly, he labored for the reclamation of virtue,—for the promulgation of a pure religion, in which the souls of humanity, should work deeds of righteousness. And later, we are informed of many, Christian pioneers, whose life-records were filled with noble deeds, wrought through the spirit of true love. Such characters claim our highest admiration. Much has been spoken, and written on the subject of love; but where is its meaning known—its power felt? In the hearts of Christian toilers, whose endeavors are concentrated in the ever progressive work of truth. Christ has said: "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one for another." Here, then, is where we find our relation to the God-spirit. *True love* is manifested in deeds of charity,—words of kindness—and acts of pure philanthropy.

When we see the effects of love's genial influence, on the sorrowing heart, how happy we feel! Its cheering rays often permeate the darkest recesses of life; and the shadows are bid to flee by its imperative, yet always soothing tones. The grieved and oppressed, are caused to look up through the eyes of joy, and behold the dawn of a brighter day, that is not to be followed by the night of sorrow. Again we see its workings, for reclamation. We see it clasp the erring one, in its loving embrace, and mildly chide the evil power, that would tempt the soul from virtue's path, and lead it in the broad road to destruction. And though gentle in its various manifestations, its influence is strong, and its power mighty; for it often conquers the most stubborn will—moves even the universe by its magic touch! It has achieved victories where its opposite spirit has suffered well-merited defeat. Oh, blessed are the fountains of love! from which the soul can sip, and be filled to overflowing. But dreary, desolate, and sad is life,—void of its true meaning, where this most coveted gem is wanting. Love is the rich soil, where grow the choicest plants of truth, on which the brightest flowers of virtue bloom. And its substance is the same, in the sunshine and storm. And though the sun cease to shine, and Earth pass away, the principles of *true love* will endure forever. And when the souls of humanity shall have attained a condition of

purity—then shall they know the supremacy of *true love* over the false earthly element, that so often claims this title; but which is only a spurious article at best. *True love*, is the Christ-spirit, *working in*, and *through* the soul, leading it ever onward, even unto perfection.

Sarah Ann Neal, *Waterliet, N. Y.*

THE MEDIUMS OF BOSTON.

THE *Spiritual Scientist*, by last three mails, contains a series of articles under the above caption, written under the *non de plume* of "Diogenes." The adoption of which appears somewhat appropriate, (though our modern philosopher is less cynical than the original.) "Diogenes" is systematically visiting all the known mediums of Boston, and reporting impartially the results. The following account appears in the issue of Feb. 28th:—

MRS. MARGARETTA SUNDERLAND COOPER.

When I rung the bell at No. 38 Milford Street one day, I was not aware that my rambles had brought me at last to the earliest of New England mediums. But to this distinction Mrs. Margaretta Sunderland Cooper lays apparently, a just claim. I say apparently, because as I called to test her powers, and not to gather material for her biography, I contented myself with reading the statement of that fact in the London Medium and Day-break. Her exercise of the gift of mediumship would appear to have been first publicly exercised September 8th, 1850, though for some time prior to this date she claims to have possessed it. Among the notable men, whom, as Mrs. Cooper says, have had sittings with her, are George Thomson of England, William Lloyd Garrison, Epes Sargent, Theodore Parker, and Horace Greely. A period of twenty-five years would seem to afford ample time and scope for the development of the mediumistic faculty to a high degree of perfection, admitting, as probably most of my readers do, that such a faculty does in reality exist at all.

Mrs. Cooper, whom I succeeded in finding on my first call, is probably over forty years of age, but if she had not told me about her twenty-five years' experience as a medium, I should have guessed her age to be considerably less. A short, symmetrical figure, small face, round features, dark complexion, and a tasteful dressing, made up the personal appearance of this medium "of ye olden time," if I may be allowed the liberty of calling her so. I was received in a nicely-furnished parlor, on the first flight, and as I entered, the sun, who had got there some time before me, poured gloriously into every corner.

Having explained the object of my visit, which was to have a test sitting with her, I naturally expected that Mrs. Cooper would have motioned me to a particular chair, carefully shut out the greater part of the sunlight, and then to have become affected with spasms in the usual way. But I was to be very agreeably disappointed. "I do not guarantee you anything," she began, "I go into no trance, and am not controlled by any Indian or little girl." I began to think it must be a hopeless case, for the Indian, or the Doctor, or the little girl have so invariably come upon the scene directly the sittings have opened, that the announcement that there was none of them on the premises presented itself to me in the light of an unsurmountable obstacle to success. "How then do you proceed?" I asked. "If there are any of your spirit friends here they will rap in any part of the room they choose. I get rappings almost all the time here. Then they will write through me in answer to any questions you may put, that is they will write what they choose."

As Mrs. Cooper spoke these words, I heard very distinct rappings, and noticing that I looked around to see where they came from, the medium asked me to examine, before we went any further, a little table which stood between us, and on which she proposed to have such friends of mine as were present rap out their messages. And I did examine it. It was a small, slenderly made table, not large enough to occupy a window, and leave plenty of room for chairs to flank it on either side. You will meet with just such little tables, over and over again, in hundreds of parlors, occupying just that position. I put both my hands and eyes to work, to find

out any contrivance in connection with it, by which rappings could be mechanically evolved, and I could find none. Perhaps that exceedingly talented gentleman whose detective skill (?) is now in the service of the Boston Globe, would say, that the reason I did not discover the source of the rappings, was, that I was not sufficiently smart. Perhaps so, and then again, perhaps not. Certainly I did not miss finding it for lack of searching, and if anybody feels bold enough to charge me with too ready credulity, I can refer them, for testimonials to my infidel and unbelieving propensities, to Mr. Ripley, Mrs. Wells, and others, all of whom stand prepared to testify that I never believe one half of what I either see or hear.

Now, before I come to detail the questions put, and answered, let me say, by way of furnishing a help to their proper understanding, that a short time since, there died in Boston suddenly, a gentleman with whom, in life, I had enjoyed intimate friendship. He was not a relative, but a friend of two years standing, and engaged in the same professional walk as myself. The *Scientist's* readers have already heard, on the authority of numerous mediums, that Diogenes is himself mediumistic. Whether that be so or not, on the morning I set out to visit Mrs. Cooper, something seemed to keep whispering in my ear, "Try and get a message from C——" and yielding to the persistent pleading of this impression,—if any impression can plead,—I determined by the time I heard those first rappings, to try the experiment. Aunt Mary, who forced herself on friend Ripley, in the anxious state, my grandmother, and the infant bearers of calla lilies, may all have been in the room, anxious to talk, but I put my foot down firmly from the outset, and would have my friend C——, or nobody.

This much by way of preface or explanation. Turning to Mrs. Cooper, I said, as soon as she had finished explaining to me her methods, "There is one friend of mine, in particular, whom I wish to hear from this morning." There were loud rappings as I spoke. I could see both the medium's hands, and as the table was not covered with a cloth, I could, by looking down, which I frequently did, instantly detect any movement of her foot or feet.

"Now," said the medium, "if you will write any name you want to write, down on that piece of paper, and keep it out of my sight. Then take this book, and place the paper upon it with this small piece of pencil, and you will perhaps get something written in reply." I wrote the name of my recently departed friend on a slip of white thick paper, through which the outline of the writing was not discernible, carefully turned it over so as to satisfy myself that Mrs. Cooper had not seen it, placed it on the surface of the book as desired, and passed it, with the little piece of pencil to the medium. Taking it with her right hand, and keeping her left hand and arm in full view above the top of the table, Mrs. Cooper passed it under the table. In perhaps at the outside, ninety seconds, more rappings were heard, I was told to withdraw the book, and, on doing so, I found my friend's name written twice over in full, on the slip of paper."

Now that writing could not come there, without agency of some sort. I didn't write it. Could Mrs. Cooper have held that book, (it was a book about ten inches by eight, and one inch thick, I should judge), under that small table, and with that same hand, (the other being above the table all the time), have written those names, and thus have deceived me? That is a simple conundrum, as it seems to me, and 'No' its only answer.

"If you will hold the book yourself under the table and ask him to touch your hand, perhaps he may do it, if you are not afraid," said Mrs. Cooper. Having no fear of the result, whatever it might be, I at once complied. Mrs. Cooper still held her right hand under the table, her left hand being kept all the while above the table, and as soon as I had got the book under the table, she placed her hand under mine, and kept moving the fingers, so as to assure me, as she said, of their position. In a few moments I felt my wrist and fingers touched, with a kind of nipping, pinching touch. The touch

seemed to me cold. In obedience to the medium's request I held my other hand just under the table, and, while I still felt the touch of fingers, as it were, on the hand in which I held the book, this also was grasped, not very firmly but still quite perceptibly, by something unseen. "Is this you C—?" I asked, "are you now clasping my hand?" Two distinct raps at once followed.

Now I addressed myself to the task of testing the reality of C—'s alleged presence. "Can you tell me through this medium my name?" I inquired. "Write the question on a piece of paper, and fold it up *inside* the book, and then he'll see if he can answer it." I complied and wrote, "C—, can you give me my name?" The piece of paper thus written upon, was placed inside the book, and the book, closed up, was at once passed in the right hand of Mrs. Cooper, beneath the table. In a minute or so, I was told to withdraw it, and I did so, opened the book, took out the piece of paper, which did not appear to have been at all disturbed from the position in which I had put it, and I found on it these words. "You ask your name." But my name was not written.

"If you write your name down, and fold it up again, he may be able to write it," said the medium. I did so, and when the book was withdrawn, and the paper unfolded, my first name had been re-written three times over.

I think I hear somebody say, "Why didn't he give you your name at once, without your having to write it." I have had the same thought present in my own mind, more than once since the sitting, though it did not occur to me very forcibly at the time, owing, as I now think, to the fact, that I was so largely impressed with the genuineness of the incidents previously developed, that it neutralized the suspicion which this circumstance would otherwise have certainly excited.

Moreover, there is this to be said, C—, and myself had always known and familiarly called each other by our surnames, and I am not clear as to whether he ever knew my two Christian or christened names at all. In any event the writing of the words, "You ask for your name" is to be accounted for, and on that score I am satisfied, though I may possibly be deceived, that it was not written by a human hand. I ought to mention that Mrs. Cooper offered to have me tie her hands while the questions were answered, but I thought there was no necessity for this, when my eyes and ears were left to such perfect freedom of action.

"I want you to tell me C—, where you and I first met, if you remember." Two raps were given, and Mrs. Cooper directed me to write down the names of several places and the rapping would indicate when I wrote the correct name. I wrote "London," and there was one rap. I wrote "Liverpool," and there was one rap. I wrote Rox—, and there were two raps, loud and distinct, before I could finish the word into "Roxbury"—which was the actual place where I first made the acquaintance of my friend.

"How long have you been in the spirit life C—," I next asked.

"He says he can't tell exactly, but not long. He had a trouble in his head for some time before he died. I should think he died of a brain trouble. If you will write down several lengths of time, he will try and tell you, when you mention the right." As a matter of fact C—, did die of a brain disease, let me say.

I wrote down "One Month," and got one rap; "a fortnight," and got two raps. C— has been dead about that length of time.

"Now, C—, I want you to tell me what concern I have been connected with." I was again told to write. I wrote five names of different Companies, and the sixth name I wrote was that of the establishment in question. Two loud raps were given before I had written the first three letters.

"Can you remember," I next asked, "the doctor whom we both knew as a friend in Roxbury?" The medium answered, "I do. He was a good fellow, wasn't he? We had lots of fun with him." The nature of our joint intimacy with the medical man referred to is very accurately described in the sentence, "We had lots of fun with him." "Can you give me his name?" Adopting the same method as before, I wrote several names,

and whilst I was writing that of the doctor, who was "our mutual friend," two clear raps came, and the test was again satisfactorily met.

By this same process of writing names and having them rapped out, I also got correct answers to many other questions, and among them the following: Where did I last meet you? What person did we talk about together then? What was your line of business? What club did you belong to?

The medium then said that she would take the slate and answer my questions in writing with her own hand, and speak them aloud at the same time. Proceeding then on the assumption that C— was actually present and able to hear and answer, I entered into a quiet chat with him, as it were, in this wise:—

Diogenes. "Well, C—, you remember that last talk we had together?"

C. (the medium speaking). "Yes, very well indeed. We had a good time, didn't we? Don't you forget what I told you."

D. "What about?"

C. "That business matter, you know."

D. "Can you remember what I showed you that day?"

C. "Certainly. What did you do with it?"

D. "Was it a book or some writing that I showed you?"

C. "Some writing, I remember it very well."

Thus we talked, for, I should think, half an hour, and every few minutes the answers of C—, through the medium, would contain pointed allusion to some incident which actually did occur between us at the last interview in question. Not once was the answer inappropriate or foolish, although, as most of these questions were not put for the purpose of testing, much of what the medium said during this branch of the sitting, would not be admissible as evidence.

But as showing the remarkable character of some of the answers, I will quote the following specimens.

D. "Do you recollect telling me about the Club, C—?"

C. "Certainly I do. I talked rather hard about that, didn't I? Well, I'm willing to be forgiven. I take it all back."

Now, in the answer here given by the medium, it will be seen a distinct allegation is made, namely, that C— had, at the interview referred to, talked hard to me about the Club. My question could convey no such impression to the medium, yet the allegation is entirely correct. Instances of this kind were frequent, during this half-hour of dialogue, many of them relating to private matters, concerning which I shall not here particularize. The sitting lasted, I should say, the greater part of two hours, but I think the foregoing presents its salient points, and is a substantial outline of the whole.

And now to form a conclusion from the whole seems to me a very easy task. And yet it is not easy. It is not at all difficult, however, to say that, at least Mrs. Cooper possesses some rare gift; whether of divination, mind-reading, or mediumship. Had the spirit of C— written the answers or spoken them, to my specific questions—I mean those as to his own name, my name, the time of his death, and so on—I should have, I confess, been more prepared to give up all doubts and admit that, for once, I had indeed talked with an immortal. But there is the circumstance that I never got a name written or rapped at until I had myself written it. Still, for all that, let the reader say to himself this,—If Diogenes, happened to call on me and say, "My friend Smith died lately, I want him to tell me this, and that, and the other thing, could I indicate by rappings, coming from whence he could not tell, a correct answer to all his questions." That's the case for and against Mrs. Cooper in a nutshell. If she is not a true medium she is, at least, a marvel of ingenuity. This, of course, excludes from the calculation the hands which I distinctly felt touch mine, and, if the reader has sufficient faith in Diogenes, to believe that he can tell when he feels anything, why he must believe that I felt those touches as described. Can the sensation of touch be produced in that way except by spirit hands? That is where we reach the rim of that vast question of psychic force, and begin to get dangerously near the terrible 'ologies!

Space forbids, even if I were capable of entering that far-reaching field of inquiry.

DIOGENES.

MR. TYERMAN.

Mr. Tyerman is maintaining his popularity in New South Wales, he has been lecturing at Newcastle with considerable success during the early part of last month, and was favorably reported by the local press. The "*Stockwhip*" gives the following report of a recent lecture at Sydney:—

TRUE RELIGION! WHAT IT IS?

At the Victoria Theatre, on Sunday evening last, Mr. Tyerman delivered a lecture upon the above subject. The building was filled in every part, and the lecture listened to with attention and frequent bursts of applause. Previous to commencing his lecture Mr. Tyerman read a short essay on "The Danger of Believing too Much," the moral of which was that those persons who delude themselves by assuming that the due observance and performance of certain prayers and ceremonies in this world will qualify them to partake of happiness in the next, will very likely find that their efforts are not appreciated. The choir and audience sang two hymns—"Nature's Temple," and "Good-will to Men," after which Mr. Tyerman proceeded with the lecture, of which the following is a condensed report:—

"True Religion! What is it?" It has been said by the orthodox creeds that we are destructionists—that our object is to pull down the structures they have been labouring for generations to build-up—and that we do not offer to erect anything in place thereof. Certainly, we are bound to make good our case: and, in the effort, to overthrow and annihilate that our of opponents. New sects are essentially iconoclastic—they must demolish and clear away the rubbish of the old edifice before they can lay the foundation of the one they would erect in its stead—and I, as a member of such new sect, am willing and determined to do my small share of this work of idol smashing; believing firmly such action is necessary. But let it not be thought that my object and desire is to destroy True Religion—that can never be done; True Religion was in existence long before us—has existed from the beginning, and can never be overthrown by the efforts of man. No! it is not True Religion against which we war—but that vast system of human manufacture which has been foisted on the world for generations and generations to the almost total obscuration of pure religion. But this human erection must eventually be swept away, and although we may not be witness to its demolition, we can help sow the seed of destruction that will bring forth good fruit for future generations to gather; and that is all I hope to do in my short time.

But we are not merely destroying—we are advancing a religion which, if accepted, will prove all-sufficient for our being. This is True Religion—a gem of priceless value, indeed, and one difficult to find amidst the heap of rubbish which is vended as the genuine article. Absolute truth is unattainable; and he who seeks it only too often finds himself adrift on the dark and dreary waters of despair, driven hither and thither, a cruel sport of the waves of doubt and delusion; he sees so much hypocrisy and cant, so much rascality and swindling, so much blasphemy and immorality, carried on under the cloak of religion, that at last he begins to question the very existence of True Religion, pure and simple. But this conclusion is an erroneous one. True Religion does exist, and we should seek everywhere to discover the treasure. It may be asked, "What is True Religion?" My friends, this is a difficult question to answer, and to many of you probably my definition may not be acceptable. Certainly it is not to be found within the binding of any book, and no man, nor body of men, have a monopoly of it. It was not given by the Creator to only a chosen few, and God no more spoke it to Moses than to any other of his creatures. No True Religion was implanted in

human nature in the beginning, but the rank weeds grafted upon it by a corrupt and vicious priesthood, have so choked and subdued the fair flower that humanity knows not where to seek it.

We will suppose a case of a man in quest of this priceless gem: He has heard much of religion, and from childhood to maturity was carefully educated upon orthodox principles, but in the battle of life, and his eager search for fame, he has neglected the teachings of youth, and fallen without the pale of any church. Years have passed away, however, and he has entered far upon the autumn of life—old memories of his youth revive, and visions of childhood float often before him—once more he lisps a childish prayer at his mother's knee, and hears her soft voice chant the evening hymn. He feels his life passing away, and asks himself—"What is this True Religion? Where is it to be found?" Well, he sets out in search of it, and enters the ecclesiastical market. He wants the real article, and, surprised at the number of different dealers therein, concludes that they cannot all possess it. The clamour is deafening, and the market appears to him to be divided into two parts—Roman Catholic and Protestant, with many subdivisions on the Protestant side. Hope is strong within him, and he feels that here he should find the gem he covets. He is accosted by a sanctimonious brother of the Methodist order, who has charge of that brand—the best in the market; he accepts what is offered, but on thinking the matter over is scarcely satisfied—it is too frothy, has too much outward show; moreover, it has a strong smell of brimstone, and is rather hotter than he likes. A Baptist next, he meets, who retails a superior article to his Methodist brother; he dips into the venture, but is far from pleased with the result—the thing is too watery. Now he enters the Presbyterian stall; the shopmen are calm, self-possessed personages, and hope, which had commenced to die out of him, now returns. His Presbyterian friends assure him that now he has discovered the object sought—that theirs is the one true religion, all others having blots of corruption, which mar their loveliness. But he soon finds that the Presbyterian religion is very cold, and lacks life, and even damns many before they are born; and a third time he is dissatisfied with the article obtained. Yet, again he goes forth, and on this occasion enters the Episcopalian stall. Again he is assured that the pure religion is only to be found within the walls of this establishment—he makes trial of the article offered, only to be a fourth time disappointed: it has too much millinery about it. There is yet another stall in the Protestant market, and he bends his steps in that direction. Come round the corner to my little store, says a Plymouth Brother, I can supply you; there we have the pure religion of Jesus Christ—paid ministers and all their surroundings we have kicked away, and take only the Bible as our guide. For a third time hope revives within him, and he fancies he has found rest. But, alas! it turns out merely a delusion—the conflicting Bible statements, and different meanings adduced therefrom, show him how vain was the fancy that at last he had found rest, and he becomes convinced the sunshine in which he had hoped to bask is still far, far away.

The Roman Catholic side now presents itself, and its priests tell him of its great age—that all other sects have no authority in ecclesiastical history for their existence, and that eternal rest and earthly consolation is only to be found within its pale. He sees the magnificence of the establishment, its gorgeous vestments, and dazzling jewels, and resolves to purchase true religion in this place. But when he hears the price he must pay—when he finds it is necessary to submit to an abject enslavement of his whole mind, body, and possessions—to be, in fact, under entire control of its priests, he revolts at the transaction, and leaves the place with a further disappointment.

He has now been through the ecclesiastical market, and has failed to discover the road to immortality. But let him not give up—let him turn to himself; all the talk of religion cannot be without some reality, and if he seek he will yet find a soothing balm for his

wounds. There is a True Religion, and it exists outside as much as inside the walls of those establishments professing to possess a monopoly of it. God did not implant any desire within man's nature without giving him the means of satisfying it, and if man turn to himself, there he will find that pure religion which is natural and universal—not the orthodox supernatural fraud, which is neither one nor the other. True Religion is simple, natural and universal, and may be shortly expressed in "being and doing good." Eighteen hundred years ago Jesus Christ struck the key-note of this religion, when he said it consisted of two things, viz: "Love to God, and Love to man;" and this love to God will manifest itself in our gratitude to Him for what He has done for us. If we are to love God we must conform to His laws; the truly religious man knows this and follows them, and aspires to the moral excellencies found in God as the grand ideal and Author of All. But God needs not this love for Himself, but that through it we shall love and benefit our fellow-man, and respect his rights. True Religion will lead us to this, and will, moreover, enable us to say not only "I have not wronged my neighbour" (this is good), "but I have done all in my power to help him, and make him as myself!" Love to God and love to man is, then, the foundation of True Religion; but, whilst mankind is divided by ecclesiastical dissensions, there is no chance of establishing this universal religion. But all can meet on the basis of helping to improve their fellows, and if we can only get men to recognise the great natural truths, and sink their differences, we may see commenced in our time, if not finished, the Great Temple of True Religion.

PERMEABILITY OF MATTER.

The following interesting letters on the above subject appear in the *Medium and Daybreak*, February 19th and March 5th:—

"To those unacquainted with the phenomena called spiritual, there is perhaps no one of them denied more strongly as being impossible than that of the passing of objects into a room which has been carefully locked and sealed, and which were certainly not in it at the commencement of a seance. There is, however, in Dr. Paris's "Life of Sir Humphrey Davy," an account given of his great discoveries in voltaic action, embodied in his Bakerian lecture, delivered November 20, 1806, and after detailing clearly the various experiments, in which portions of bodies were decomposed, and conveyed through other bodies in spite of the strong chemical affinity which existed between them, such as the decomposition of sulphate of potash and the conveyance of its sulphuric acid through a solution of ammonia, and many others of a like nature. Dr. Paris says:—"Amidst all these wonderful phenomena, that which perhaps excites our greatest astonishment is the fact of the transfer of ponderable matter to a considerable distance through intervening substances, and in a form that escapes the cognizance of our senses!" This great and truly wonderful fact was elicited by Davy nearly seventy years ago, and has doubtless been repeated by many other chemists. It throws a light on the fact of the passing of objects into a closed room, which certainly need not excite a greater degree of astonishment than the conveyance of sulphuric acid through ammonia without chemical union, each fact being accomplished by means which "escape the cognizance of our senses."

If a spirit in the body was enabled to discover the means of accomplishing the fact which excited Dr. Paris's astonishment, why should not disembodied spirits be able to do the same thing by abstracting the force called attraction of cohesion for an instant, and again supplying it? This is, in fact, what they have repeatedly told us is their mode of proceeding to pass objects through walls. I am not aware that any explanation has been given of Davy's beautiful experiment, but it is not unlikely that the wonderful effect was due to the rapidity of the electric current in conveying the atoms of the sulphuric acid through the intervening spaces between the atoms of ammonia.

That matter is permeable, i.e., that it is composed of atoms which do not touch each other, is admitted by philosophers, and a very beautiful and simple experiment proves it to be so. Take a bar of steel, sixteen or eighteen inches long, which is not magnetic; or, if it shows any power of attracting fine iron filings, destroy its magnetism, either by heating it, or by repeated blows with a hammer along its whole length. When this is effected, take it by the middle in one hand, and, holding it in the magnetic meridian (19° west of true north) and dip (inclination of 70° from horizontal plane), strike the upper end sharply repeated blows with the hammer, and it will be found to have become magnetic. The rationale of this is, that in the non-magnetic condition the atoms are no longer polar, and that the vibration produced by the blows of the hammer on the upper end of the bar gives them the opportunity of taking advantage of the position of the bar, and thereby re-acquiring their polarity.

The passage of hydrogen through iron pipes in sufficient quantities to cause serious loss to gas companies, shows it permeability.

The Florentine experiment, in which it was attempted to condense water in a globe of gold without success, but pressure used being sufficient "to occasion the water to exude through the pores of the metallic vessel in which it was enclosed" (*vide* "Parke's Chemical Essay," page 424) shows the permeability of this metal.

Thinking that every endeavour should be made to explain the phenomena called spiritual, by admitted facts in recognised science, I am induced to offer the above with a strong conviction that if scientific men would condescend to learn the facts, they would soon be able to teach the causes, at least, the secondary causes of them, and thus elucidate the material part of this grand and important subject.

Brighton.

HENRY COLLEN.

To the Editor.—Dear Sir,—I think I can supplement the evidence Mr. Collen brings forward under this head from the experiments of recognised science. The analogy by which I always endeavour to make credible to beginners or sceptics the passage of Mrs. Guppy, or a diningroom table through a lath-and-plaster ceiling, without visible scar or half-healed place of exit, is that of the phenomena exhibited by what chemists know as *crystalloid* and *colloid* substances. These are names given to two states of matter, often readily convertible into one another, as when the calloid starch is converted into the crystalloid sugar, but yet presenting remarkable differences; for crystalloids can with readiness pass through animal membranes, such as bladder, and through calloids, whilst the latter are unable to do either the one or the other. Thus all our food has to be converted from the calloid state into the crystalloid before it is capable of passing through the dividing membrane into the vessels that supply the blood.

In close connection with this is the curious fact, recently discovered by physiologists, that the corpuscles of the blood, little bodies about 1-400th of an inch in diameter, can pass through the walls of the capillaries, or fine blood-vessels into which the arteries ultimately divide, without leaving a trace of their passage. Now the walls of these capillaries are absolutely structureless, that is, present no pores, or other openings, under the microscope, so that here is a real passage of matter through matter, on a very small scale. But even this is understating the case—witness the following passage from an address of Professor Redfern to the Biological Section of the British Association this year:—"They (i.e. the blood-corpuscles) do, in fact, move through the walls of the blood-passages, and wander about freely in what we call solid tissues." Not Mrs. Guppy herself can be said to "wander about freely" through a whole row of houses; so that the recognised marvels of science are still ahead of ours, at least on a miniature scale. One more quotation from Professor Redfern will suffice: "If basement membranes (i.e. the skin and mucous membranes), the walls of blood-vessels, and cells are made up of calloid matter, we can easily understand how they are penetrated by crystalloids; and in like

manner it is perfectly possible that they may be traversed by other substances in solid forms—as, for instance, the walls of blood-vessels by the corpuscles of the blood.”

Professor Redfern's speech may be found in *Nature* for August 20th of last year. The distinction between crystalloids and colloids will be given in any manual of chemistry of a tolerably recent date.—Yours truly,

Feb. 23rd, 1875.

FRANK PODMORE.

THE REV. CHARLES CLARK AT THE ATHENÆUM ON THE 16TH OF MAY.

WONDERS will never cease! It has now been demonstrated that Victoria contains, not only fossil clergy of of the palæozoic age in abundance, but even a few living specimens belonging to the recent tertiary formation! Report says one has lately been discovered among the tertiary debris on the Western Hill, to the no small consternation of the fossils of the older stratum; while we recognise Mr. Clark as belonging even to a later date.

It was with no small pleasure that we read the lecture delivered by him on the occasion above referred to, and can bear our testimony that we look upon him as not a fossil, but a genuine living specimen in a progressive stage, using his reason and his senses for testing truth, as every other intelligent man of the period. We said progressing—we should have said *retrogressing*, for we discovered, to our great astonishment, in reading over his address, that the rev. gentleman had not quoted one of the Paulistic dogmas, or of the myths of St. John; so it looks as if he had actually forsaken Orthodoxy, and fallen back upon the antique teaching of Jesus—"that men should repent"—Mark vii., 12. "Forgive, and ye shall be forgiven"—Luke vii., 37. Notwithstanding Paul's denunciation of such conduct (Gal. i., 8), he seems to have commenced "digging deep" and building his house (his faith) upon a rock, not of "a finished work," but like the wise man, *obedience to the will of God* (i.e. what we consider the laws of Nature), Matt. vii., 15-29. If so, there is little doubt but he will use "tried stones, select and precious," well ascertained truths in its creation. Who would ever have expected, in this civilised age and country, to have witnessed the resurrection of the old worn-out Jewish dogma—"Do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God" (Mica vi., 8), as if God desired "mercy and not sacrifice," or as if love to God with all the heart "were more than all burned offerings and sacrifices!" views utterly repugnant to Orthodoxy.

The rev. gentleman even said—"Whosoever good works are wrought, there is the spirit of God; wherever the name of Jesus is confessed, the confessor of that name is accepted by God, whether he follow with us or not."

So that even to such renegades as we are, devoted admirers of Jesus, long cast out by Orthodoxy, and condemned as infidels, materialists and atheists, is the hope of sparing mercy held out.

We beg leave to congratulate Mr. Clark and his supporters on the step they have taken, and trust that they may continue to progress "in the truth as it is in Jesus"—the primitive and unadulterated gospel.

THE Rev. Cuthbert Fetherstonhaugh has separated from the Church of England, and placed his resignation as minister of Urana and Jerilderie in the hands of the Church of England committee for the district. The committee accepted his resignation; but at the Urana end an almost unanimous wish has been expressed that Mr. F. should continue his work as an unsectarian minister. We understand that while terminating his connection with Jerilderie, he will continue for some time at Urana, so as to afford time both to the residents and himself to arrive at a deliberate and just decision. We have it on good authority that the reason Mr. F. has separated is that he no longer holds the Church of England teaching as to the doctrine of the Trinity and Godhead of Jesus.

One of the greatest facts and noblest consequences of spirit communion, is that of Inspiration, both a proof of its everlasting effects and a blessing in its results, showered upon the race of men like rich fruits cast down from those who have ascended higher into the tree of knowledge and wisdom, though often crushed and injured, they are indeed precious, not as some would have you believe, the natural result of rottenness or of the unchained wind, but veritable gifts from heaven. It is not all that can perceive them, only some favoured ones know the taste and the richness, and these straightway give unto their fellows, who planting rear from it the stately harvests that are your only wealth. Before the dawn of history man was under the guidance of higher intelligences. Indeed, ere he was fully man he grew beneath their hands and prospered upon their tuition, but only after ages of development was he rendered capable of receiving what we term Inspiration,—that is to say, the reception by the human mind of thoughts, ideas, and truths, from the spirit world, inestimable in their value and beauty. With the names of the greatest recipients of this bounty you are all familiar, Adam, Zoroaster, Confucius, Moses, Daniel, Jesus, Mahomet, Swedenborg, and many more in human knowledge, still more beyond it. But there are many lesser forms to which we will draw your attention, for it has penetrated the human mind, and through it permeated the whole of nature so vastly and so nobly by both great and small streams that in it lies the key to many of the most important mysteries that cloud the eyes of men.

Our descriptions must of necessity be brief and incomplete, and will rather be directed to those forms not usually touched upon than to those with which you are all familiar, though if known truths be again recapitulated it is either because they are imbedded in the general design or of sufficient importance to require reiteration. Inspiration is first divided into the two great classes, the unconscious and the conscious, of which as yet the former is much the more prevalent.

The slightest inspiration of all is when persons not possessing what we term the mediumistic faculty are by some peculiar conjunction of circumstances, elevating them above their ordinary level, rendered for the time being amenable to spirit influence. The lower organism may by some strong stroke upon the better strings that usually remain unsounded be elevated for the time above his ordinary state, and thus attract spirit influence as he becomes passive to it and receives it.

There is another form of inspiration (we use this term as being the widest) which is of secondary character, as it were, when one is inspired, in order to influence another. This is seen markedly in great natures or geniuses swaying whole peoples who through them receive higher and nobler thoughts than they could otherwise have done, and who therefore are in a measure inspired.

A lesser form of this is in use among us when we move some more ordinary person who may be upon a low plane, but still under our influence to impart what we wish to one of his fellows perhaps on the same plane, but not controllable by us directly. Then again another large class are those we have incidentally mentioned who by the elevation of their character lay themselves open to our influence up to the present time almost always unconsciously except in the case of religious inspiration when it being expected to arrive from some peculiar source the medium is more conscious of reception.

But a very large class of these, perhaps the class who carry an inspiration most directly and most powerfully to the mass are the poets and others whom we influence in their words or deeds for their own good and for the good of others.

If we should tell you how much many great men have owed to this source you would be considerably astonished, for often thoughts which would not appear to be essentially above the status of that individual are the best expression he is capable of of some sublime idea. So not only in their higher thoughts, but in many of the subordinate ones spirit influence could be traced.

The next class of great importance are small in number, the direct mediums of the present day who consciously yield themselves to be the instruments of their arisen friends.

Up to the present time it may be noticed that very few, if any, of even the most inspired have declared or even supposed themselves to be the instruments of spirits. It no doubt at first appears strange that these men inspired through all centuries have never told us this great truth. The reasons are various; the greatest is that they have no place for it in their mental tablet. They heard voices, they saw visions, they dreamed dreams, they occasionally spoke in abnormal conditions, but the influence was never, or rather relatively never so powerful, as for a spirit control to be able to compel the medium to utter a truth so entirely beyond any of his convictions or knowledge, for particularly in this higher kind of mediumship we are in large measure dependent upon what the medium brings us. We use it with far greater power than he himself could, seeing clearly the varied capabilities of his mind touching the chords with a conscious and practised hand, and awakening to life the dormant sensibilities which his circumstances had not evolved. But if the medium have any peculiar predilection, any established mode of thought, which has, as it were, grown into his nature and become organic, it is as if one string of the instrument was warped, to emit some peculiar sound not thoroughly in harmony, and strike it as we will we can only produce the music that is there. If there be sound we waken it to new and glorious melodies undreamt of, and perhaps beyond anything which education could have developed from him. But if he brings to us a broken instrument what can we do. The most skilful of all players who could hold the ears of man captive, can do nothing unless the instrument is complete; and so we.

In the next place a medium having a peculiar predilection his tendency is to attract to him spirits of a like nature who pander and encourage this often abnormal development. Further it has not appeared a matter of so great importance as now that man should know who speaks to him. The tendency of the inspirations was to elevate mankind, mentally, morally, and spiritually, and there was so much to be done in this wide field that the other was left partially neglected. There are other clauses upon which we have not time to dwell. These are the chief.

But note that in spite of these disadvantages numberless intimations of the spirit world have reached you though tortured and wrested from their primal significance by the many intervening obstacles, and we yet find scattered through all mythologies, through all testaments, and through all times, the fact of spirit communion. Often it shines forth in such a peculiar form as to be almost indistinguishable. The connection between the witchcraft of the past ages and spirit communion is not at first perceived. It arose not as some would have you believe from the aspiration of men towards better things, but from their lust of power, their pride and selfishness, desiring only to have control over their fellows to raise themselves in evil to do harm to those who opposed them, and therefore it arose among the low, the ignorant, or more especially, the debased of mankind. To them were drawn a like class of spirits, who aiding them at times deserted them at others, treating them as they might expect to be treated as a fit retaliation for their wickedness. The old Hebrew books of the Talmud overflow with instances of spirit communion, even more than the books at present received by the Christians. Among that mass of extraordinary legends the careful student can discern strange glimpses of great truths. In the Hindoo religion spirits of good and evil played a large part; in the religion of Zoroaster they were almost the religion in the system of Confucius their administration is acknowledged in the fetichisms of savage nations the same facts are to be found, though diminished and degraded into empty symbolism. The mythologies of Greece and Rome are crowded with narratives of the doings of supernatural beings. Scandinavia and the other northern nations of Europe, the Aztecs, Peruvians, in every nation and in

every creed the same truth shines forth, sometimes feebly, but always perceptible, and often powerful. Among the natives of your continent it is not so marked, though still noticeable as in the neighbouring colony of New Zealand, for there unnumbered legends relate the appearances and communications of their departed chiefs. Disdain not these things because of the source from which they come to you. The student of these old religions, though seeming to withdraw himself from the useful purposes of life, is yet doing brave work in the temple of truth. Blinded as men are at present by their sectarianisms of religion or irreligion, it cannot be expected of them that the complicated web of history that has come down to you should receive an equitable handling. Great writers have discoursed of the various portions of this theme. Most have discovered something new, but as yet only portions of them have been unravelled. The rays of truth have been refracted from numberless mirrors, but have found no capable expression. A man like Buckle, of vast intellectual power, had during his lifetime this great source shut out; so it has been with all writers save those who fly to the opposite extreme of looking upon each event as a direct interference of a perpetually interfering deity.

There has been no harmonious interpretation of the history of humanity, and ere this can be given it must be read by the light of spiritualism, for in spiritualism lie cardinal facts which have raised and ruined nations. In spiritualism lies the key to religion and to revelation, and long and patient must be the toil and application requisite to accomplish the end desired. It will yet be accomplished in the far triumphs of futurity,—the labours of those who devote themselves to the unravelling of this tangled web are well worthy, and their various researches shall be gathered up and welded into one complete cycle of time.

In these later days a noble spirit of inquiry has arisen with regard to the facts that it contains, and a much improved system of research inaugurated. It will prosper, and as it prospers partially by inspiration will reveal its breadth and importance, its marvellous effects, beneficial and progressive, leading up to a more general reception and more anxious desire for those rich feasts of the soul which shall then be poured purely and plenteously upon the race of men.

(To be continued.)

THE TEMPERANCE HALL LECTURES.

THE present course of lectures are drawing to a close. Mr. Bright delivers the final one, which will be a review and summing-up of the previous twelve, on Sunday next. During the whole of last month the hall has been filled before the service commenced, and numbers have been unable to gain admission. The *Argus* has given fair abstracts of the last four lectures, which we append:—

MR. CHARLES BRIGHT delivered his eighth lecture at the Temperance Hall on Sunday evening, May 2nd, the subject being

SPIRITUALISM IN RELATION TO FREETHOUGHT.

The hall was crowded in every part, and the lecturer was listened to with great interest throughout the discourse. Mr. Bright said that to the freethinker this world was a perpetual marvel. He had no six days' mechanical creation to explain everything, but stood in blank ignorance of how he came here. So also was he uninformed of the ultimate fate of himself and the human race. He did not believe the statement that a select few were to sing hallelujahs through eternity, proudly and happily, while the human race, with these exceptions, were to be tortured in fire for the same limitless succession of epochs. Unaware as a child whence he came, or what was to become of him, he found himself a thinking, reasoning entity in the midst of other entities, on one of the smaller satellites of a planet, which he called the sun, whirling about in space in the distant company of countless systems of universes. Besides the cosmic grandeur which reported itself to his senses, what might there not be reporting itself to intelligences different to his own? To anyone whose faculty of wonder was not deadened by an unreasoning belief in belittling fables, present existence was the miracle of miracles, and no fact could come with additional marvellousness. The freethinker was therefore prepared to investigate any phenomenon with a calm and unprejudiced mind. The lecturer then contended that modern spiritualism had sufficiently established itself to claim the attention of all freethinkers. Though easily denounced by those who had devoted no time to its examination, it was a startling fact that in each instance where a competent committee, or a man of eminence in science or literature, had gone thoroughly to work to expose its delusiveness, the result had helped to confirm its claims. He referred to Dr. Robert Hare, Professor of Chemistry to the

University of Pennsylvania; Dr. Mapes, Professor of Agricultural Chemistry to the National Academy, New York; the committee of the London Dialectical Society, and Mr. Crookes, the editor of the *Quarterly Journal of Science*. The opinions of the press on the Dialectical Society's report were also noticed, and the lecture terminated with a word of warning to investigators that in dealing with Spiritualism, as with any other subject, the first duty was to preserve *mens sana in corpore sano*.

THE WEAKER SEXES.

May 9th, the hall was crowded. Mr. Bright said that a modern writer had characterised the clergy as the third sex, and in proposing to treat of the "weaker sexes," he had adopted the classification thus suggested, and desired to say a few words concerning women and clergymen, who, in the present day constituted the main support of the orthodox religions. He had not the slightest intention of being disrespectful to either. The representative women of this age were almost equal in power of intellect to the representative men, and the clerical profession was redeemed by men like Maurice, Stanley, Robertson, Tulloch, Caird, Channing, and Parker. Still, among the average of women and clergymen, their training caused them to be slaves to fashion—fashion in dress, fashion in thought, fashion in creed, and fashion in speech. The lecturer then referred to the ordinary description of education for women, and contended that it increased their natural tendency to suffer themselves to be controlled by impulse and feeling rather than reason. The consequence was that woman, discerning with great clearness the need of that supersensual comfort and help which are born of faith, seemed as yet incapable of recognising that this comforting faith is readily separable from the mythological fashions which at different ages of the world attach to it. Once teach women to divorce feeling from form, once let them realise that the living God, the benign Father Spirit, remains, though many of the Bible stories take their places with Lempiere's, and Job be read in the same way as Homer, and religion as a trade will have received its death-blow. In treating of clergymen, Mr. Bright alluded to the way in which those who ventured to think a little freely were tabooed by their "cloth," and how, in the Church of England especially, the weakest member of a family was allotted to the clerical profession. In the past the traffickers in faith had had their uses, but now they merely served to keep the longing souls of men from the light, preventing men from being, as they ought to be, each his own priest.

INFIDELITY.

May 16, the hall was again crowded. Mr. Bright commenced by referring to three stories of Greek mythology—Prometheus, Hercules, and Narcissus, and expressed his belief that they were not strictly true, for which he said no one termed him an infidel. He then referred to three Bible stories—the overthrow of Lucifer into hell, the exploits of Samson, and the transformation of Lot's wife into a pillar of salt, and declared that these also seemed to him to be lively legends rather than God-inspired history, yet for this latter opinion there were those who would cry out against his infidelity. It was a happy sign that infidelity of this type was spreading among all classes. Even the clergy were falling victims to the healthy epidemic. Some who still considered themselves almost orthodox went so far as to declare that the history of Adam and Eve was merely a "poetical allegory," forgetting apparently that upon the alleged fall of man the whole of the Christian creeds were based. Regarded in a broad unsectarian aspect, infidelity really meant "the wilful violation of that within you which you believe to be truth, justice, and righteousness." He adopted, as agreeing with his own views, the definition of it given by Andrew Jackson Davis. Absolute truth man could not attain to in his present state, but he could be faithful to the truth as perceived by him. The majority of mankind did not care to think their thoughts out, and thus went on mistrusting their religious teachers, but afraid of utterly disregarding their creedal teachings. Religion stood shivering at every move which was made by science, the true revelation of God and His laws. Instances of this fear, and the subsequent surrender of religious dogma were given, and the lecturer said it was a satisfaction for all advanced souls who essayed with faltering steps to join in the exalted march of the pioneers of humanity, that the citadels of ignorance in the past had been stormed, and every point of vantage gained by those who had been denounced as infidels. Reference was made to the career of Shelley, who, though not permitted to have charge of his own children in his lifetime, was now beginning to have justice done to his divine nature. The lecture terminated with an exhortation to belief in a God now immanent in the world and all its doings, not merely miraculously busy in the remote past.

THE PIONEERS.

May 23rd. Mr. Bright said that in the midst of the mis-termed infidelity of our epoch, a faith was growing which bade fair to be of more value to the world than any which had preceded it. This was a faith in human progress. The religions, one and all, had despaired of humanity, but the science of history tended to prove its slow but assured advance. In this process of development certain clear-seeing men, gifted with the true faith—faith in the divine government of the world, outside as well as inside the barrier of the creeds—had to act as pioneers. The priests who guarded the barriers denounced, persecuted, and, where possible, destroyed them, but this arose from the fact that progress was necessarily hateful to men who had no faith in goodness outside the barrier they guarded. The lecturer contrasted the ideal of the Creator of the Universe entertained by the orthodoxy of the day with that formed by the premier minds of the last three centuries, the opinions and careers of Voltaire and Paine being prominently discussed. Mr. Bright concluded by contend-

ing that the voice of these and other pioneers in religion, politics, and sociology was beginning to have an overpowering influence.

As other engagements prevent Mr. Bright entering into arrangements for a second course at present, the committee have arranged with Mr. E. F. Hughes (of Portland) to deliver a series of six lectures, commencing on Sunday, June 13th. Those who had the pleasure of listening to the short course of lectures given by Mr. Hughes in the Masonic Hall a few months since, will doubtless be gratified to hear of his re-engagement. He is a man of advanced ideas, and expresses them fluently and logically. It is probable that the preliminary readings will be given by Mr. B. S. Nayler.

PROGRESS OF THE ENERGETIC CIRCLE.

THE Chairman writes to us under date the 18th May:—"We are quietly proceeding with our investigations under the strict test conditions we agreed to sit under at the beginning of the current year, and, I am happy to say, with the most gratifying results. It will be remembered in my last letter, it was stated that a separate figure, reclining on the right of the medium's chair, was seen by all the circle, but that no features were seen except a black beard on the chin, which several of us had felt. Since then we have, after the exercise of much patience and perseverance, been making substantial progress, as, in addition to seeing the faceless figure clothed in white drapery, and the medium at the same time, several of us have now seen the features of this objective personality. But these have only as yet been seen by four out of the twelve members present. I have seen them, and am enabled to describe them as follows:—A broad forehead and large face with regular features, dark complexion, and a bushy, black beard. The form in a standing posture, and a head above the medium while seated. So far I have not seen the face of the medium at the same moment. I saw that of the materialised spirit, but as King's light, was luminous, and I seated next to him, he could not have moved without my seeing him. There is no doubt but that I shall be able to report ere long that I have seen both faces as well as I have hitherto seen both forms at one and the same moment, and may here add that the face of King—for it is he—is precisely the same as that we all saw under the old conditions, where the medium used to walk round the room. On last Monday evening I saw by the aid of King's light a materialised foot and portion of the leg as well. The toes were bare, and foot that of a big muscular man. More soon."

Sandhurst,

18th May, 1875.

THE CHAIRMAN.

[A visitor to the Energetic Circle sent us an account of a seance last month too late for insertion. During removal of our office the MSS has been unfortunately lost.—Ed. H.L.]

MELBOURNE PROGRESSIVE LYCEUM.

An exhibition session of the above Lyceum was held at the Horticultural Hall, Victoria-street, on Monday, May 24th. The members of the Lyceum assembled in the afternoon, and performed some ornamental marches, under the direction of Mr. T. Sanders (vice conductor), after which the members and officers adjourned to the anteroom where tea was provided and done ample justice to. At 6 p.m. the Lyceum was called to order by the conductor, Mr. J. L. Williams, and the proceedings commenced with a song by the whole Lyceum, entitled "Be Happy." This was followed by golden chain recitations and musical calisthenics. The conductor then announced that the three prizes given by Mr. Sterling for the best answers to questions given in the Lyceum during the past quarter would be presented, and read the award of the committee, as follows:—Miss A. Sanders, 1st prize; Miss R. Niemann, 2nd prize; Miss Miss B. Bonney, 3rd prize. Mr. Williams then presented the prizes, which consisted of three books, the first a handsome edition of Tupper's Poema, with enamelled cover; the second, A. J. Davis's "Fountain," and the third the Crumb Basket, by Mrs. A. D. Cridge. The recipients were greeted with applause on leaving.

the platform. At the conclusion of this ceremony a number of recitations and songs were given by members of the Lyceum, one little girl, about six years old, reciting "The Raindrop," a pretty piece of 9 or 10 verses, distinctly and correctly. At the conclusion of the recitations the conductor asked Mr. Charles Bright, who was present among the audience, to address a few remarks to the Lyceum.

In responding, Mr. Bright expressed his pleasure to find that excellent institution still in existence, and hoped to have more frequent opportunities of attending it in the future. He said it was a novelty for him to be addressing young folks, and he would feel more at his ease with a large adult audience, but he would endeavour to adapt his few remarks to the occasion. In commending the exercises, &c., and their physical and moral influence, there was one thing he hoped was not lost sight of, namely, "prayer," but to pray it was not necessary to be sad or too serious. Innocent mirth, joy, and laughter were natural to young people, and consistent with a religious sentiment. (Applause.)

At the conclusion of Mr. Bright's address the Lyceum formed in marching order. It had been intended to repeat the ornamental marching performed in the afternoon and conclude with a song, but as possession of the room had to be given at 8 p.m. the proceedings were brought to a close with a shorter march, and the Lyceum dismissed, the children being supplied with some fruit as they left. The entertainment appeared to be a very enjoyable one, both to the Lyceum and spectators, and will doubtless be remembered with pleasure by the children.

VERIFICATION OF A MESSAGE FROM JUDGE EDMONDS.

At an advanced Melbourne circle, in August last, the medium was controlled by the spirit of Judge Edmonds, who incidentally mentioned that he had been informed of the existence of the circle shortly before his death. Writing to Mr. Peebles, in November last, we mentioned the incident to him, and asked if he had spoken to the Judge about our circle. In a letter from Mr. P., received last month, he says in reply—"Yes," I mentioned your circle to Judge Edmonds before he left the body. I saw him less than two weeks before he passed on."

A TRANCE LECTURE was delivered at the Turn Verein Hall, Latrobe-street East, on Sunday, May 23rd, the medium being Miss Phillips. The subject chosen was—"The Spirit of the Age," and was ably treated by the controlling influence. There was a large and attentive audience.

The Rev. Mr. Lewers has been holding forth against Spiritualism, and denouncing it in no measured terms from his pulpit at Sandhurst. Some of the audience were disgusted at his remarks, which they considered outraged common decency; and one gentleman at the conclusion moved a vote of censure on him, which, however, was not put. Go on, Mr. Lewers! you are doing good, though we do not admire your method.

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